

**What Is Claimed Is:**

1. A method for setting up an agent shortcut operation to be activated at an electronic device connected to a network, comprising:  
    receiving a selection of an agent shortcut operation from a user on an agent setup device; and  
    sending the selected agent shortcut operation through the network to the electronic device to be available for subsequent activation.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the agent setup device is a different device than the electronic device.
3. The method of claim 1, further comprising providing a list of agent shortcut operations to the user on the agent setup device.
4. The method of claim 1, further comprising receiving an indication from the user of an agent activation device that will activate the agent shortcut operation.
5. The method of claim 1, further comprising receiving an indication of a code from the user that is used to activate the agent shortcut operation.
6. The method of claim 4, wherein the agent shortcut operation may be remotely activated by the user on the agent activation device by e-mail, by phone, or by using another wireless, wireline, or network protocol.
7. The method of claim 1, further comprising receiving a selection of a plurality of agent shortcut operations from the user, and sending the agent shortcut operations to the electronic device to be available for subsequent activation.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic device comprises one of a computer, a set top box, a home alarm, a thermostat, an electronic device controller, a gaming console, a television, a digital video recorder, a phone, a lighting system, or another consumer electronics device.
9. The method of claim 1, wherein receiving a selection of an agent shortcut operation from a user comprises receiving a pre-selected code from the user.
10. The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic device is a set top box of a cable television system.
11. The method of claim 10, wherein the agent shortcut operation enables remote setting of electronic device preferences, such as a parental control level or default language.
12. The method of claim 10, wherein the agent shortcut operation enables remote reminder setting or recording of a desired program.
13. The method of claim 10, wherein the agent shortcut operation enables remote searching for program content.
14. The method of claim 10, wherein the agent shortcut operation enables remote activation of electronic or electrical equipment connected to the set top box.
15. A method for activating an agent shortcut operation in an electronic device connected to a network, comprising:
  - sending an agent shortcut operation to the electronic device;
  - receiving an activation signal from an agent activation device for the agent shortcut operation; and
  - in response to the received activation signal, sending a signal to the electronic device to activate the agent shortcut operation.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein the electronic device is a different device than the agent activation device.
17. The method of claim 15, wherein the activation signal is a pre-selected code.
18. The method of claim 15, wherein the electronic device comprises one of a computer, a set top box, a home alarm, a thermostat, an electronic device controller, a gaming console, a television, a digital video recorder, a phone, a lighting system, or another consumer electronics device.
19. The method of claim 16, wherein the agent setup device is one of a computer, a phone or a personal data assistant, or another consumer electronics device.
20. The method of claim 15, wherein the electronic device is a set top box in a cable television system.
21. The method of claim 20, wherein the agent shortcut operation enables remote setting of electronic device preferences, such as a parental control level or default language.
22. The method of claim 20, wherein the agent shortcut operation enables remote reminder setting or recording of a desired program.
23. The method of claim 20, wherein the agent shortcut operation enables remote searching for program content.
24. The method of claim 20, wherein the agent shortcut operation enables remote activation of electronic or electrical equipment connected to the set top box.
25. The method of claim 15, further comprising:

sending a plurality of agent shortcut operations to the electronic device, each of the agent shortcut operations having a corresponding activation code; and

sending a signal to activate one of the agent shortcut operations to the electronic device upon receipt of the corresponding activation code.

26. The method of claim 15, further comprising receiving a setup signal from an agent setup device, the setup signal designating what device may act as the agent activation device.

27. The method of claim 26, wherein the setup signal indicates an activation code that upon entry in the agent activation device enables the agent shortcut operation.

28. A system for setting up an agent shortcut operation to be activated at an electronic device connected to a network, comprising:

means for receiving a selection of an agent shortcut operation from a user on an agent setup device; and

means for sending the selected agent shortcut operation through the network to the electronic device to be available for subsequent activation.

29. The system of claim 28, wherein the agent setup device is a different device than the electronic device.

30. The system of claim 29, further comprising means for providing a list of agent shortcut operations to the user on the agent setup device.

31. The system of claim 28, further comprising means for receiving an indication of a code from the user that is used to activate the agent shortcut operation.

32. The system of claim 28, further comprising means for receiving a selection of a plurality of agent shortcut operations from the user, and sending the agent shortcut operations to the electronic device to be available for subsequent activation.
33. The system of claim 28, wherein the electronic device comprises one of a computer, a set top box, a home alarm, a thermostat, an electronic device controller, a gaming console, a television, a digital video recorder, a phone, a lighting system, or another consumer electronics device.
34. The system of claim 28, wherein the means for receiving the designation from the user of at least electronic device comprises means for receiving a designation from the user of a plurality of electronic devices, further comprising sending the selected agent shortcut to the designated plurality of electronic devices.
35. The system of claim 28, wherein the electronic device is a set top box of a cable television system.
36. The system of claim 35, wherein the agent shortcut operation enables remote setting of electronic device preferences, such as parental control level or default language.
37. The system of claim 35, wherein the agent shortcut operation enables remote reminder setting or recording of a desired program.
38. The system of claim 35, wherein the agent shortcut operation enables remote searching for program content.
39. The system of claim 35, wherein the agent shortcut operation enables remote activation of electronic or electrical equipment connected to the set top box.

40. A system that activates an agent shortcut operation in an electronic device connected to a network, comprising:
- means for sending an agent shortcut operation to the electronic device;
  - means for receiving an activation signal from an agent activation device for the agent shortcut operation; and
  - means for sending a signal to the electronic device to activate the agent shortcut operation, in response to the received activation signal.
41. The system of claim 40, wherein the agent activation device is a different device than the electronic device.
42. The system of claim 40, wherein the activation signal is a pre-selected code.
43. The system of claim 40, wherein the electronic device comprises one of a computer, a set top box, a home alarm, a thermostat, an electronic device controller, a gaming console, a television, a digital video recorder, a phone, a lighting system, or another consumer electronics device.
44. The system of claim 41, wherein the agent activation device is one of a computer, a phone or a personal data assistant or another electronics device.
45. The system of claim 40, wherein the electronic device is a set top box in a cable television system.
46. The system of claim 45, wherein the agent shortcut operation enables remote setting of electronic device preferences, such as parental control level or default language.
47. The system of claim 45, wherein the agent shortcut operation enables remote reminder setting or recording of a desired program.

48. The system of claim 45, wherein the agent shortcut operation enables remote searching for program content.
49. The system of claim 45, wherein the agent shortcut operation enables remote activation of electronic or electrical equipment connected to the set top box.
50. The system of claim 40, further comprising:  
means for sending a plurality of agent shortcut operations to the electronic device, each of the agent shortcut operations having a corresponding activation code; and  
means for sending a signal to activate one of the agent shortcut operations upon receipt of the corresponding activation code.
51. The system of claim 40, further comprising means for receiving a setup signal from an agent setup device, the setup signal designating what device may act as the agent activation device.
52. The system of claim 51, wherein the setup signal indicates an activation code that upon entry in the agent activation device enables the agent shortcut operation.
53. A machine-readable medium having stored thereon a plurality of executable instructions to set up an agent shortcut operation to be activated at an electronic device connected to a network, the plurality of instructions comprising instructions to:  
receive a selection of an agent shortcut operation from a user on an agent setup device; and  
send the selected agent shortcut operation through the network to the electronic device to be available for subsequent activation.

54. A machine-readable medium having stored thereon a plurality of executable instructions to activate an agent shortcut operation in an electronic device connected to a network, the plurality of instructions comprising instructions to:

- sending an agent shortcut operation to the electronic device;
- receiving an activation signal from an agent activation device for the agent shortcut operation; and
- in response to the received activation signal, sending a signal to the electronic device to activate the agent shortcut operation.